

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY ARA/CCA: EPSMITH:YT

APPROVED BY ARA: HWSHLAUDEMAN

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AMCONSUL CURACAO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 223236

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: NL, EEWT, CU

SUBJECT: DUTCH AID TO CUBA

L. JAN MEIJER, SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO FOREIGN MINISTER, ACCOMPANIED BY AMBASSADOR TAMMENONS BAKKER, CALLED AT THEIR INITIATIVE ON ARA DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY SHLAUDEMAN OCTOBER 4 TO REVIEW RECENT DUTCH INITIATIVES ON AID TO CUBA. FOLLOWING POSITIVE CUBAN RESPONSE TO DUTCH PROBES IN EARLY SEPTEMBER, MEIJER, TOGETHER WITH HEAD OF TECHNICAL PREPARATIONS DIVISION OF MFA, P.F. KIEWIET DE JONGER AND SPANISH-SPEAKING HEAD OF EXTERNAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS OF NETHERLANDS ANTILLES, V.P. BARENJO SPENT 3 DAYS IN CUBA END OF SEPTEMBER EXPLORING POSSIBILITIES FOR FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

2. MEIJER EXPLAINED DUTCH INITIATIVE STEMMED FROM AID PLANKS IN DEN UYL GOVERNMENT'S PLATFORM INTRODUCED TO PARLIAMENT IN MAY 1973. DUTCH ENVISAGE EXPANDING ASSISTANCE
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PROGRAMS IN 1975 WITH FOUR STATES, EGYPT, ZAMBIA, JAMAICA

AND CUBA, BASING DEVELOPMENT POLICIES ON PRINCIPLE OF SELF-HELP WHERE 'SOCIAL STRUCTURES' PURPORTEDLY PERMIT BENEFITS TO GO TO GENERAL POPULATION AND NOT RESTRICTED GROUP. MEIJER SAID HE HAD DISCUSSED HIS MISSION TO CUBA IN ADVANCE WITH SWEDES, NORWEGIANS (WHO ARE ACTIVE IN CUBA) AND WITH

UN DEPUTY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR FOR LATIN AMERICA GABRIEL VALDES.

3. MEIJER SAID FIRM DUTCH OFFER FOR 1975 LIMITED IN NATURE, COMPRISING FINANCIAL HELP TO SUM OF 10 MILLION GUILDERS (APPROXIMATELY \$3.7 MILLION), 60 PER CENT IN CONCESSIONAL LOANS, PART OF WHICH WILL BE TIED TO EXPENDITURES IN NETHERLANDS. CUBANS IN TURN SUGGESTED FOLLOWING PRIORITIES IN LINE WITH THEIR AS YET UNFINISHED LONG-TERM 1975-1980 PLAN: PRIORITY ONE - TRANSPORTATION, INCLUDING REHABILITATION OF HARBORS; PRIORITY TWO - FOOD AND HEALTH SECTORS, INCLUDING LABORATORY FOR BABY FOOD AND BAKING OF BREAD WITH NEW KINDS OF MATERIALS, PRIORITY THREE-EQUIPPING AND STRENGTHENING UNIVERSITY TECHNICAL FACULTY. MEIJER'S TWO TRIP COMPANIONS REMAINED IN CUBA TO WORK OUT ADDITIONAL DETAILS ON THESE PROPOSALS. MEIJER ADDED THAT CUBANS SEEMED INTERESTED IN TECHNOLOGICAL AND SCIENTIFIC MATTERS TO MUCH GREATER DEGREE THAN OTHER LATINS.

4. MEIJER SAID HE LEFT CUBA WITH PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS CONSIDERABLY ALTERED IN TWO AREAS. FIRST, SHOCK OF ECONOMIC EMBARGO PROFOUND. WHILE CUBANS HOPED IN FUTURE TO TURN MORE TO CARIBBEAN AND LATIN AMERICA, ANY RETURN TO PRE-CASTRO ECONOMIC RELATIONS IS OUT. SECOND, HE WAS IMPRESSED BY HIGH INTELLECTUAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL ABILITY OF HIS CUBAN CONTACTS. HE ALSO MADE FAMILIAR SPECULATIVE COMMENTS ABOUT POSSIBLE LONG-TERM INCOMPATIBILITY BETWEEN LATIN TEMPERAMENT AND SOVIET-STYLE COMMUNISM.

5. SHLAUDEMAN THANKED MEIJER AND BAKKER FOR THEIR CALLS BUT MADE NO SUBSTANTIVE COMMENT ON THE DUTCH PLANS FOR AID TO CUBA. INGERSOLL
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